

## SENATE RESOLUTION 209

By Williams

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend the 5th Annual Forge Invitational Muscleder Show and its promoter, Tim Lopata.

WHEREAS, the American muscleder has come back to the forefront of automotive interest recently, primarily due to high-visibility auction sales in the one hundred thousand dollar range, the revival of the breed itself through late-model cars like the 2007 Shelby Ford Mustang, and a fresh resurgence in performance development from the major manufacturers; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those special events that celebrate the halcyon period in American history when muscledcars ruled the road while capturing the nation's collective heart and imagination; and

WHEREAS, the era of Detroit's wildest horsepower years were fondly recreated at the Sevierville Convention Center on October 26-27, 2007, when some of the rarest Chevrolet, Ford, and Chrysler performance street cars and race cars of the 1960s and 1970s were on display at the 5th Annual Forge Invitational Muscleder Show, the only event of its kind; and

WHEREAS, these authentic vehicles included the tire-blazing 427-inch Camaros and Corvettes, 426 Hemi-powered Plymouth Barracudas and Dodge Chargers, special Pontiac GTOs, Ford Shelby Mustangs, and many more; and

WHEREAS, the once-a-year invitational event, promoted by Tim Lopata, had completely outgrown its former locations, so in 2007 Sevierville was selected to expand the show; moving the cars into the new premiere Sevierville Convention Center ensured that this multi-million dollar assembly of horsepower was protected from the elements; and

WHEREAS, muscledcars were transported from all over the country for the 2007 Forge event, each vehicle having been carefully selected on the basis of its rarity and condition; and

WHEREAS, of special interest was a group of rare, but unrestored, "barn finds" that auto enthusiasts usually only dream of locating; many other musclecars were pristine restorations that have never before been on public display; and

WHEREAS, racing fans in attendance were thrilled by the tribute to the late Dick Harrell, a professional drag racer who was responsible for many specialized Chevrolet performance cars of the 1960s; Mr. Harrell, who died in a racing accident in 1971, was represented by his daughter Valerie, his friend Dale Pulde, one of the winningest and best funnycar drivers in IHRA history, many employees and friends, and several very rare Chevrolet vehicles in whose development Mr. Harrell was involved; and

WHEREAS, the 5th Annual Forge Invitational Musclecar Show featured a special section of Hemi 426 and Six Pack powered cars from 1964-1971, one of the largest displays ever of these musclecars in this type of venue; and

WHEREAS, Larry Reyes, driver of the Roland Leong 1969-1970 Hemi powered funnycar, was in attendance at the Forge Show with that special vehicle, along with Don Hardy, a famous chassis and funnycar builder of some of the winningest NHRA IHRA race cars of the 1960's and 1970's; and

WHEREAS, in addition to a new section designed to showcase the 2000-2007 new era built super/musclecars, the Forge Show featured several other racing personalities from the past, a select group of specialized parts vendors, a display of rare automobile dealership memorabilia, new Pro-touring cars, and many other attractions; and

WHEREAS, prominently featured in numerous automotive and racing publications, the 5th Annual Forge Invitational Musclecar Show provided Tennesseans with the valuable opportunity to actually see the musclecars that made history from Detroit when horsepower ruled the streets; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby honor and commend the 5th Annual Forge Invitational Musclecar Show and its promoter, Tim Lopata, for bringing the horsepower, beauty, and excitement of the musclecar back to the Knoxville area, recognizing

the unique role that the musclecar has played in intertwining American automotive history and American popular culture.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.